



2011 Special Grazing Advisory: June 10, 2011

Tentative Opening Dates for Grazing in Wilderness Meadows

Background Each year, opening dates for grazing are established for the wilderness meadows of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. Setting opening dates for the meadows allow the parks to protect biological and scenic resources from unacceptable impacts that may occur when the meadows are too wet.

As meadows are most susceptible to damage from stock when ground moisture levels are high, opening dates are established based on the amount of precipitation that the wilderness receives over the winter.

Recognizing that commercial outfitters, recreational users, and park operations need to be able to plan trips in advance, we issue these bulletins two times during the spring season as a service to keep all stock users informed. The bulletins update current conditions and anticipated opening dates. **All bulletins are advisory only, the actual opening dates of specific meadows will be determined in the field. For final opening dates call the Wilderness Office prior to your trip at 559-565-3766.**

Opening dates are anticipated based on snowpack in the wilderness. The snowpack is the best indicator we have of the amount of moisture the meadows received. The park has a series of snow courses that are measured periodically through the winter, with the late April snowpack measurements giving the latest and last estimate of conditions. We are providing this bulletin as **tentative** information based on late April/early May conditions.

According to the amount of moisture in the snowpack, we categorize the year as one of the following:

- 1) **Dry** (less than 50% of average snowpack)
- 2) **Normal** (51% to 150% of the average snowpack)
- 3) **Wet** (more than 150% of the average snowpack)

Opening dates in wet years are later than dry years.

Current Situation Although snowpack measurements following the May 1 snow survey indicated that the snowpack in the Kings and Kern drainages was below the 150% of average cutoff for predicting opening dates, unseasonably cool and wet weather over the past month has meant a significant delay in melting of the snowpack. We anticipate that meadows throughout the parks are likely to open according to wet year opening dates or later in some areas.

Consequently we advise visitors travelling with pack stock to plan according to the wet year dates, which are attached to this bulletin. Note that these dates remain tentative and are subject to revision based on evaluation of conditions in the field.

Tentative Opening Dates The attached list shows the opening dates for "Wet" years for meadows in the meadows of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. The list is arranged by drainage and travel zone. **These dates are only guidelines; changes in opening dates will likely be made as the season progresses depending on actual conditions.**

If you are planning a trip on or near the opening date for a particular area it is your responsibility to contact the parks' Wilderness Office at **559-565-3766** for the latest update on conditions. For more information, also visit www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/wilderness.htm. Note that the opening dates only restrict grazing, pack trips prior to the opening dates are permitted as long as **all feed is packed in** and stock remain tied up at all times.

Your cooperation in managing stock use in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks is appreciated. Together we can continue to protect the natural diversity and beauty of the Sierra wilderness.

WET SNOWPACK YEAR OPENING DATES

Updated June 10, 2011

South Fork San Joaquin River Drainage

Opening Date	Travel Zone	Meadow Area
8/1	28	South Fork San Joaquin River
8/15	33-1	Evolution Meadow
8/31	33	McClure, Darwin Meadows (Colby Meadow CLOSED TO GRAZING in 2011)
8/31	33	Lower McGee Canyon
8/15	34	Evolution Basin

Kings River Drainage

Opening Date	Travel Zone	Meadow Area
8/1	38	Blue Canyon
8/15	39	LeConte Cyn & Palisade Cr (below lakes)
8/15	42	Dusy Creek
8/15	45	Palisade Lakes
8/15	46	Upper South Fork Kings River
8/15	47	Cartridge & Cataract Creeks
8/1	51	Middle Fork Kings River (Simpson Mdw & below)
8/1	52	Kennedy & Lewis Creeks
8/15	53	Dougherty & Horseshoe Creeks
8/31	53-7	Shorty's Meadow
8/1	54	Granite & Copper Creeks
8/1	56	Twin Lakes & Pinchot Pass Area
8/15	57	Woods Lake Basin
8/1	58-1	Castle Domes Meadow
8/1	58	Woods Creek Crossing & Baxter Creek Drift Fence
N/A	61	Sixty Lake Basin CLOSED TO GRAZING in 2011
8/1	63	Charlotte Creek
8/1	65	Upper Bubbs Creek (above Vidette Meadow)
7/20	66	Lower Bubbs Creek (Junction Meadow)
7/20	67	East Creek
7/20	68	Sphinx Creek
7/20	69	Roaring River Ranger Station Area
7/20	70	Cloud Canyon (Brewer Creek and above)
7/20	71	Deadman Canyon (Austin Camp and above)
7/15	72	Sugarloaf Area
7/20	72	Ferguson Creek & Crowley Canyon
7/20	73	Ball Dome Area

Kern River Drainage

Opening Date	Travel Zone	Meadow Area
8/1	79	Cold Springs, Kern-Kaweah River
8/5	79-2	Milestone Creek
7/25	80	Upper Kern Basin & Tyndall Creek
7/25	81	Wright Creek
8/10	81-2.3	Wallace Creek Waterfall
7/25	82	Upper Kern Canyon (above Hot Springs to Junction Meadow)
8/1	83	Whitney & Crabtree Creeks
N/A	83-4	Upper Crabtree Meadow CLOSED TO GRAZING in 2011
8/1	84	Siberian Pass Creek
8/1	84	Lower Rock Creek (below Nathan's Meadow)
8/15	85	Upper Rock Creek (Nathan's Meadow & above)
7/1	86	Lower Kern Canyon (Hot Springs to Kern Ranger Station)
8/10	87	Big Arroyo & Chagoopa Plateau
8/10	88	Little Five Lakes
8/15	88	Big Five Lakes
8/1	89	Coyote, Soda, & Lost Creeks
8/1	89	Lower Rattlesnake Canyon (Cow Camp)
8/15	89	Upper Rattlesnake Canyon (above Cow Camp)

Kaweah River Drainage

Opening Date	Travel Zone	Meadow Area
7/20	74	Clover & Silliman Creeks
8/1	75	Lone Pine Creek
8/1	77	Bearpaw Meadow to River Valley
8/1	77	Redwood Meadow
8/1	77	Cliff Creek & Pinto Lake
7/20	90	Hockett Plateau
4/1	91	South Fork Kaweah River
8/1	92	Monarch & Franklin Creeks
8/1	93	White Chief, Eagle & Mosquito Creeks
8/1	94	Mineral Creek
4/1	96	North Fork Kaweah River

These tables only list TENTATIVE opening dates. Always check for area-specific regulations related to stock use. Find details about these regulations by calling the Wilderness Office at 559-565-3766, requesting a copy of the annual Stock User's Guide, or visiting the website at www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/wilderness.htm.